



TESTIMONY IN OPPOSITION TO SB 12

February 14, 2023

Chair Gossage and Members of the Senate Public Health and Welfare Committee,

The Kansas Chapter, American Academy of Pediatrics (KAAP) represents more than 450 of the practicing pediatricians in the state. The KAAP has the fundamental goal that all children and adolescents in Kansas have the opportunity to grow safe and strong. It is with this goal in mind that we want to share our testimony opposing the proposed SB 12. The KAAP recommends that transgender and gender-diverse youth (TGD) have access to comprehensive, gender-affirming, and developmentally appropriate health care that is provided in a safe and inclusive clinical space.

Gender is a complex issue, medically and socially, and this legislation does not require a perfect understanding about what it means to be transgender. Transgender individuals have a gender identity that does not match the gender assigned at birth. The term intersex applies to individuals who cannot be easily categorized anatomically as either male or female, and this can have a diverse set of causes which can include genetic, hormonal, and idiopathic diagnoses. Generally, intersex babies are born with either a phenotypic presentation of gender that either is not clear on physical examination, or they have a genotype (genetic code) that doesn't match their phenotype (anatomy). There are also individuals who do not have the typical XX (female) or XY (male) numbers of sex chromosomes.

Evidence-based standards on gender-affirming care have existed for decades. They require medical professionals to carefully evaluate each patient and make individualized decisions in the patient's best interest. The nation's leading health organizations support gender-affirming care -- including but not limited to the American Academy of Pediatrics, American Medical Association, American College of Obstetricians & Gynecologists, Endocrine Society, Pediatric Endocrine Society, and more. These organizations support the evidence-based, scientific provision of appropriate medical care for gender-diverse and transgender youth.

KAAP recommends that youth who identify as transgender have access to comprehensive, gender-affirming, and developmentally appropriate health care that is provided in a safe and inclusive clinical space. This healthcare is inclusive of family-based therapy and support that recognizes the importance of an individualized approach that best suits the needs of each individual.

Realizing the complexity involved in medical decision-making, a one size fits all approach is detrimental to a physician's ability to make the proper medical decisions for each patient in conjunction with their families. Laws that specifically dictate or limit what physicians discuss during health care encounters undermines the patient-physician relationship. Also, legislative



mandates regarding the practice of medicine do not allow for the infinite array of exceptions or cases in which the mandate may be unnecessary, inappropriate, or even harmful to an individual patient.

Criminalizing the provision of this evidence-based, scientific medical care inserts politics in the exam room and adversely affects a physician's ability to provide appropriate medical care based on their training, expertise, and experience. Youth who identify as TGD often confront stigma and discrimination, which contribute to feelings of rejection and isolation.

Any discrimination based on gender identity or expression, real or perceived, is damaging to the socioemotional health of children, families, and society. Even if we don't understand an individual's life journey, we owe it to our children to provide opportunities to feel like they belong.

This legislation would negatively impact and discriminate against both transgender and intersex youth in Kansas and thus we strongly oppose SB 12. We welcome any questions you might have and are happy to serve as your resource on all pediatric issues.

Respectfully submitted,

Dr. Dena Hubbard, MD, FAAP
Public Policy Committee
Kansas Chapter, American Academy of Pediatrics